

# ENDING STEREOTYPES FOR AMERICA

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Hello, my name is Charles Six. I run a nonprofit organization called Ending Stereotypes for America, which uses history to disprove ethnic and racial stereotypes and highlights how all groups have contributed to America, making it the greatest country in the world.

I fully support House Bills 4886 and 4902.

My passion for educating America about the correct African history stems from my high school experience.

When I entered my freshman year of high school the senior class was viciously racist; Confederate Flags were everywhere and I hardly went a day without hearing a racist comment. Ironically, some of these students often had friends who were black; moreover, none of them were racist a few years earlier. It didn't make sense, so **I asked them why they were racist and was told that black people are simply not as smart or moral as white people; they're just different.** When I pointed out that the black people we knew didn't fit those stereotypes they explained that they were the exceptions and said, **"look at Africa—they were always primitive hunters and gatherers," and "black people have never done anything for our world."**

I thought, you know what, that is exactly what I've been taught in school. I still remember my high school history teacher writing all the major regions of the world on the board and next to each region he wrote the major kingdoms. Next to Europe he had Greece, Rome, Spain and England. Next to Asia he had China, Japan and the Mongol Empire. Next to Africa, he wrote hunters and gatherers.

I knew my friends would discriminate in the real world and could be pushed to commit violence if pushed in the right way, so I did some research and was shocked to discover that almost every encyclopedia and book on world history had sections about the advanced kingdoms of Sub-Saharan black Africa. Some of these kingdoms had castles, currency, advanced metal working and medical techniques, writing, long distance trade with Europe, Asia and the Mideast; some were praised by contemporary Arabs and Europeans for their prosperity, safety and military power. In fact, 2/3 to 3/4 of Pre-colonial black Africa had those kingdoms, the remaining 1/4 to a 1/3 were mostly in villages and 1% or less were likely the hunters and gatherers who we see most of the time. That breakdown is probably not unlike Europe or Asia (The Sami, a white hunting and gathering group in Europe, who live in small huts, has about the same number of people as the so called Bushman and Pygmies). Yet, in Africa, we focus almost exclusively on the most primitive people and ignore the great kingdoms. That reinforces those false stereotypes that lead to discrimination, violence and a weaker nation.

If kids were just taught that black Africa had these advanced kingdoms it would preempt or greatly alleviate the racism and false stereotypes that often divide our country.

The new content expectations include Africa before 1500 and one of the bullet points lists some of the advanced kingdoms of Africa, however it also includes the more primitive people and the history of slavery in Africa. My fear is that people will, as has been done for years, focus on the most primitive Africans, and maybe even ignore the advanced kingdoms entirely. Thus, students will walk away still thinking that the only African history was of primitive people and slavery.

These bills simply ensure that students will walk away with an accurate portrayal of Africa.

Thank you.

For more information please go to:

**BBC's Story of Africa:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

**PBS's Wonders of Africa:** <http://www.pbs.org/wonders/index.html>

**Ending Stereotypes for America:** [www.endingstereotypes.org](http://www.endingstereotypes.org)

### Hunters and Gatherers Historically Represent Less Than 1% of Africa



THIS IS NOT AFRICA!

### THIS IS THE REAL AFRICA



Mali was larger than W. Europe, had 30-40 million people, 12 provinces and famous universities

### Empire of Mali

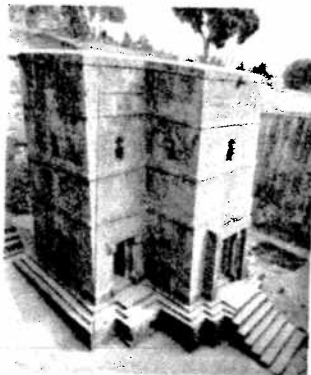
- "Among the kingdoms of the rulers of the world, only Syria is more beautiful. Its inhabitants are rich and live comfortably."  
-Mahnud Kull, medieval Syrian scholar on Mali
- "These Negroes are of all peoples those who most abhor injustice...Complete and general safety one enjoys throughout the land."  
-Ibn Batuta, 14th century Arab scholar who had traveled to China, India, East Africa, North Africa, and finally Mali.
- "In Timbuktu there are numerous judges, doctors, and clerics, all receiving good salaries from the Mansa... There is a big demand for books and manuscripts imported from Barbary. More profit is made from the book trade than from any other line of business."  
-Leo Africanus, famous 16th century Arab author, well known in Europe



### Ancient Ethiopia



"The World's Third Kingdom," as recorded by the famous Persian philosopher Mani (3rd century AD) behind Persia and Rome, but ahead of China.



### Nubia/Kush/Meroe

- Defeated Roman, Greek, Persian and Assyrian Armies
- Developed Alphabet
- Ruled over the largest kingdom ever in Africa when they conquered Egypt.



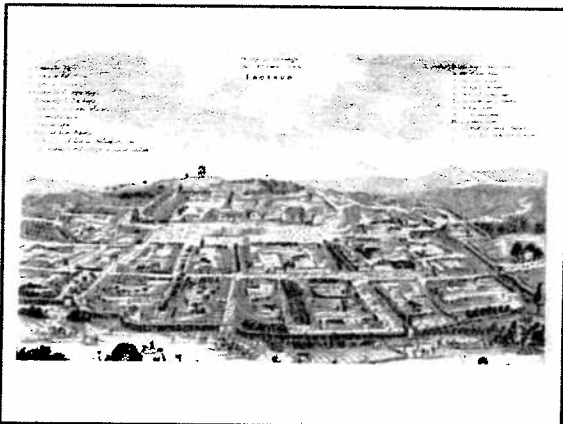
## Egyptian/Nubian King Taharqa



7<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. Ruler of the Egypt

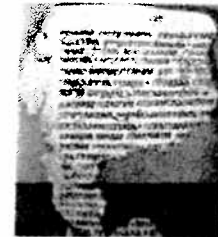
## In the Bible (Nubia/Kush)

- "A land of sailing ships, a people tall... to a people dreaded near and far, a nation strong and proud."  
—Isaiah 18:1-2
- Taharqa's name looms large in the Old Testament (2 Kings 19:9 and Isaiah, 37:9)
- Nubia came to the aid of Israel when they were under attack by the Assyrians
- Moses Married a Kushite
- Queen of Sheba may have been Ethiopian



## Writing—in Africa?

- Nubia developed a cursive writing system with 23 different signs, including vowels.
- Aksum developed an alphabet, Ge'ez, in the 5th century.
- Nsibidi in Nigeria and Cameroon had 23 symbols by at least 1700, and was completely independent of external influence
- Many other symbols used for communication



## Sami



## This Is the Real Africa



# Ending Stereotypes For America

"To divide along the lines of caste or creed is un-American." ~ Teddy Roosevelt

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## Did you know?

- An **African American**, Jean Du Sable, founded **Chicago**, America's third largest city?
- The **world's first jet ace** was the **Arab-American** Korean War hero, Col. James Jabara?
- The **chief architect and engineer** for the **American Transcontinental Railroad** was the Jewish American Theodor Judah?
- **Hispanic Americans** have received the **highest ratio of Medal of Honor** winners of any group?
- America's **first self-made female millionaire** was **African-American** C.J. Walker? She invented many beauty products, which became the foundation for her prosperous business in the early 1900s.
- The founder and president of the **largest distributor of Bibles in the world** is an **Arab-American**, **Sam Moore**, of Thomas Nelson Publishers?
- **Asian American** quarterback Timmy Chang holds the Division I-A college football **record for most career passing yards** (17,078)?
- A Zogby International survey revealed that **78 percent** of teenagers 13 to 18 **associated Italian Americans** with either **criminal activity or blue-collar work**, despite the fact that Italian Americans have a **higher income** than the national average, **two-thirds** are employed in "**white-collar positions**," and Italian-American **organized crime is roughly the same as Americans as a whole** (only 3,000 out of 26 million Italian Americans)?

*Visit Our Website!*

[www.endingstereotypes.org](http://www.endingstereotypes.org)

## Founder of Chicago and U.S. Patriot



**Jean Du Sable**, whose father was a real pirate of the Caribbean, moved to New Orleans in the 1750s to seek his fortune. The fear of being mistaken for a runaway slave led him to St. Louis where he set up a thriving fur trading business.

In 1767 Sable fled north when the British took the city (Sable's close business ties with the French and Native Americans concerned the British).

For several years he traveled around the Great Lakes, especially Michigan, trapping and trading.

Realizing the potential of a swampy area he had crossed, he **built a trading post** in 1774, which soon became a bustling urban center. He built a bake house, a poultry house, a mill, a stable, a dairy, and a smokehouse for meats. **His settlement became the city of Chicago**, America's third largest city.

The British imprisoned him briefly during the **Revolutionary War** under suspicion of being a U.S. spy. He was shipped to Fort Mackinac where he was described as a "handsome Negro, well educated...with many friends who give him a good character." Soon after his release he helped the U.S. in its important raid of Vincennes.

Sable retired to Missouri where his house later became the official home of the state's first governor.

**"Its inhabitants are rich and live comfortably."**

~A famous medieval Arab scholar on Mali



The most famous medieval atlas, commissioned by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, displays Mansa Musa prominently

## Medieval Empire of Mali

Mali was a medieval West African empire, **larger than Western Europe**, that had a population between 20 to 40 million.

Mali had at least 12 governors, traded with Europe and the Mideast, had over **200 schools**, its own currency, bustling urban centers, large buildings and a cabinet that included a finance minister who controlled currency output to prevent inflation.

Medieval writers praised Mali for its safety, prosperity and scholarly nature. One Arab wrote that Mali's, "inhabitants are rich and live comfortably."

A 14<sup>th</sup> century Arab, who traveled to China, India and throughout the Mideast wrote that "the Negroes (of Mali) are of all people those who most abhor injustice....**complete and general safety is known throughout the land.**"

Mali became Europe's largest supplier of precious metals. The first European coins since the fall of Rome were smelted from Malian metal.

When Emperor **Mansa Musa** (pictured) traveled to the Mideast, he gave away so much money—likely to attract foreign traders—songs were sung about him in Cairo for centuries.

Learn more on our website [www.endingstereotypes.org](http://www.endingstereotypes.org)

## About Ending Stereotypes for America



Charles M. Six presenting to Sparrow Hospital

Ending Stereotypes for America (ESFA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that uses history to disprove false ethnic stereotypes and highlights the contributions each group has made in building America.

ESFA was founded by Charles M. Six. He created ESFA when he discovered his high school friends believed that black people were inferior because they were falsely taught that black Africans were always primitive hunters and gatherers and

that black people had never invented anything of significance.

Six delivers free books to children and makes presentations at schools, churches, businesses, events and universities.